

Chronic Disease Indicators: Indicator Definition



Papanicolaou smear use among adult women aged ≥ 18 years

Category:	Cancer
Demographic Group:	Resident females aged ≥ 18 years without a hysterectomy.
Numerator:	Female respondents aged ≥ 18 years who do not report having had a hysterectomy and who report having had a Papanicolaou (Pap) smear within the previous 3 years.
Denominator:	Female respondents aged ≥ 18 years who do not report having had a hysterectomy and who report ever having or never having had a Pap smear (excluding unknowns and refusals).
Measures of Frequency:	Annual prevalence — crude and age-adjusted (standardized by the direct method to the year 2000 standard U.S. population, distribution 9*) — with 95% confidence interval.
Time Period of Case Definition:	Previous 3 years.
Background:	In 2000, a total of 13% of women aged ≥ 18 years had not had a Pap smear within the previous 3 years. During 2001, cancer of the cervix caused approximately 4,400 deaths, and 12,200 new cases are diagnosed annually. Cases detected at the earliest, premalignant stage (in situ) are more common, accounting for 55,000 cases/year. Black women have higher rates of cervical cancer incidence and mortality than do white women.
Significance :	Approximately 40%–60% of cervical cancer deaths can be prevented by increased use of the Pap test and effective, timely treatment. The dramatic decrease in cervical cancer incidence and mortality during the past 40 years is mainly the result of the widespread use of the Pap test.
Limitations of Indicator:	Recommendations for screening frequency vary by risk factor and a 3-year interval is not appropriate for all women.
Data Resources:	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS). http://statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov/
Limitations of Data Resources:	As with all self-reported sample surveys, BRFSS data might be subject to systematic error resulting from noncoverage (e.g., lower telephone coverage among populations of low socioeconomic status), nonresponse (e.g., refusal to participate in the survey or to answer specific questions), or measurement (e.g., social desirability or recall bias).
Healthy People 2010 Objectives:	3-11: Increase the proportion of women who receive a Pap test. (3-11b is specific for women aged ≥ 18 years who received a Pap test within the preceding 3 years.)

* See Klein RJ, Schoenborn CA. Age adjustment using the 2000 projected U.S. population. Hyattsville, MD: US Department of Health and Human Services, CDC, National Center for Health Statistics, 2001. Healthy people 2010 statistical notes, no. 20. <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/statnt/statnt20.pdf>